

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2846

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1984

PASS AID

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US

SUBJECT: CALL ON PRESIDENT FRANGIE

REF: BEIRUT 1883

1. I CALLED ON PRESIDENT FRANGIE YESTERDAY, FEBAUARY 11, AT 1700 LOCAL. CONVERSATION LASTED 40 MINUTES. FOUND PRESIDENT FRANGIE IN A RELAXED, EVEN JOVIAL MOOD, EXPLAINED I WAS DEPARTING FOR BRIEF VACATION IN THE UNITED STATES DURING WHICH I WOULD BE CONSULTING FOR WEEK IN WASHINGTON. INFORMED HIM OF TIME NEWSTOUR TRIP AND EXCELLENT IMPRESSION MADE ON AMERICAN MAGNATES BY ARAB LEADERS. ALSO REVIEWED SENATOR PERCY'S RECENT STATEMENTS. LATTER HAD ALREADY BEEN REPEATED TO PRESIDENT AND HE WAS DELIGHTED. HE SHOWED ME DRAFT OF FRIENDLY LETTER HE PLANS TO SEND TO SENATOR AND ASKED ME TO HELP POLISH SOME OF HIS ENGLISH. PRESIDENT WAS OBVIOUSLY MORE OPTIMISTIC
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THAN WHEN HE SAW SENATOR PERCY. HE

NEVERTHELESS CONTINUES TO BE DEEPLY CONCERNED RE SADAT'S POSITION AND AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE TIMING WAS SHORT FOR THE EGYPTIAN LEADER AND THAT NOT ONLY MUST HE ACHIEVE DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BUT ALSO MUST BE HELPED FINANCIALLY TO ALLEVIATE THE BURDENS OF THE EGYPTIAN MASSES.

2. PRSIDENT FRANGIE RAISED AUB, INDICATING THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY HAD SPOKEN TO HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY, BOUTROS DIB, YESTERDAY MORNING AND THEY HAD SICSUSSED THE QUESTION OF DISPOSING OF SOME OF AUB'S REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS IN BEIRUT. HE SAID HE "HOPED" SUCH WOULD NOT OCCUR BUT HE APPRECIATES AUB'S CURRENT CRITICAL FINANCIAL SITUATION. HE NEVERTHELESS OPINED THAT REAL ESTATE SALES WOULD MERELY POSTPONE THE DAY OF RECKONING. HE ASKED ABOUT AID'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND WHEN IT WOULD BE AVAILABLE AND THE PROSPECTS FOR FY 76. SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AUB COULD NOT REPEAT NOT MEET ITS MARCH PAYROLL. I TOLD PRESIDENT THAT I DID NOT KNOW PRECISELY WHERE WE STOOD WITH AID ASSISTANCE BUT THAT I WOULD ONCE OGAIN LOOK INTO THE ENTIRE MATTER WHEN IN WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION THE WEEK OF FEB 23. THE RPESIDENT SPOKE FORCEFULLY WITH REGARD TO THE MAINTENANCE OF AUB AND SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A DISASTER TO THE LEBANESE, THE ARAB WORLD AND THE US IF IT WERE DRASTICALLY TO MODIFY ITS PRESENT OPERATIONS OR EVEN BE OBLIGED TO CLOSE. HE WENT ON, HOWEVER, TO COMPARE THE COST OF AUB WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING HERE. WHILE HE FULLY RECOGNIZES AUB'S SUPERIORITY, HE SAID HE COULD NOT HELP BUT WONDER OCCASIONALLY WHY IT COST UP TO TEN TIMES AS MUCH TO EDUCATE A YOUNG PERSON IN AUB AS COMPARED WITH EDUCATION IN SOME OF THE OTHER LOCAL UNIVERSITIES.

3. I SHALL BE SEEING DR. KIRKWOOD PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE AND HOPE TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS AUB WHILE IN WASHINGTON. GODLEY

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